

REMARKS

Claims 19-40 remain pending in the above-referenced application and are submitted for the Examiner's reconsideration.

Applicants have amended claim 38 to recite a passivating layer made of SiO₂. In the '372 reference, an SiO₂ layer is provided only for the usual masking on the substrate surface (column 2, lines 7-11), but not on side walls nor on the etching ground of the trenches. There is also no suggestion of this. By contrast, claim 38 recites a passivating layer of SiO₂ provided at least at the side walls. Since this is not found in the reference relied on to reject this claim, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

In light of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Prompt reconsideration and allowance of the present application are therefore earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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